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Valz

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(54) **DISPLAY-BASED SYNCHRONOUS COMMUNICATION**

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H04N 7/15 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***H04N 7/15*** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC H04N 7/15; H04N 7/152; H04N 7/14; H04N 7/141; H04N 7/142
USPC 348/14.01–14.16
See application file for complete search history.

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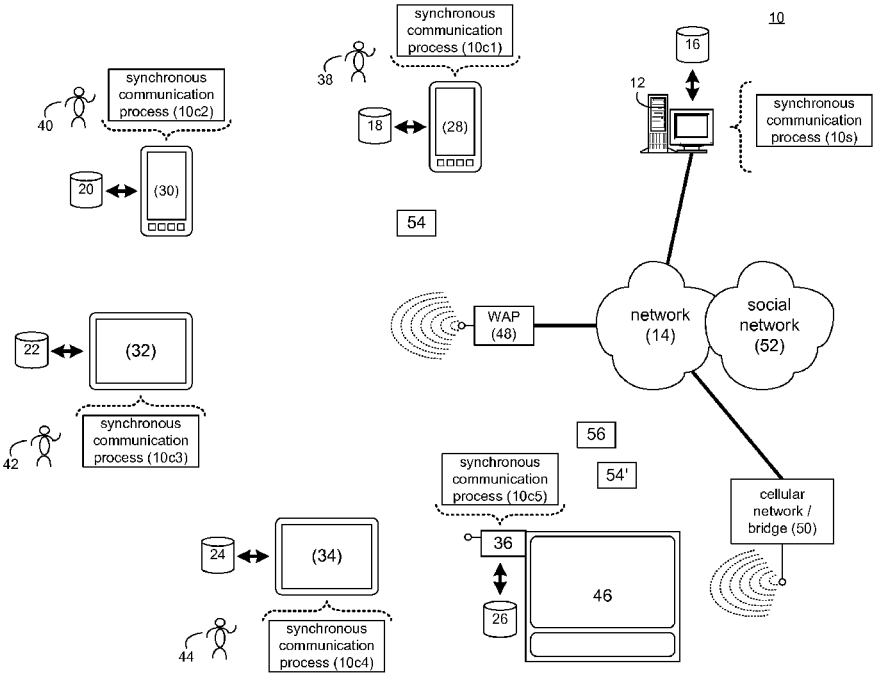
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A method and computing system for receiving, on a computing device, a plurality of individual audio/video streams from a plurality of client electronic devices used by a plurality of users. The plurality of individual audio/video streams are processed, on the computing device, to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users. A broadcast request is received, on the computing device, from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device. A session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session is provided, via the computing device, to the media interface device, wherein the session audio/video stream includes at least a portion of the plurality of individual audio/video streams.

31 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets



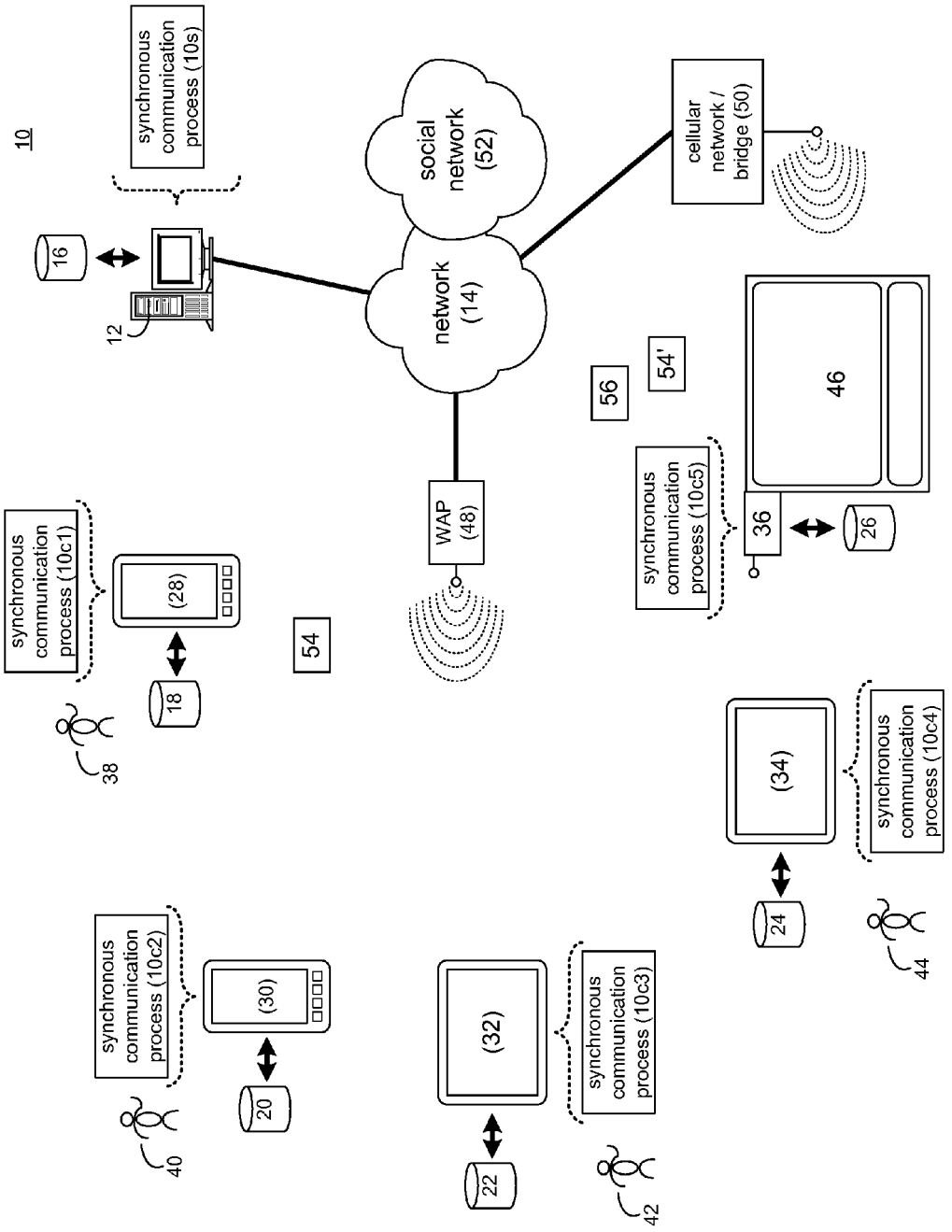

10
synchronous communication process (10s)
16
12
network (14)
social network (52)
cellular network / bridge (50)
WAP (48)
54
56
54'
46
synchronous communication process (10c1)
(28)
18
38
synchronous communication process (10c5)
36
26
synchronous communication process (10c2)
(30)
20
40
(32)
22
synchronous communication process (10c3)
42
(34)
24
synchronous communication process (10c4)
44

FIG. 1

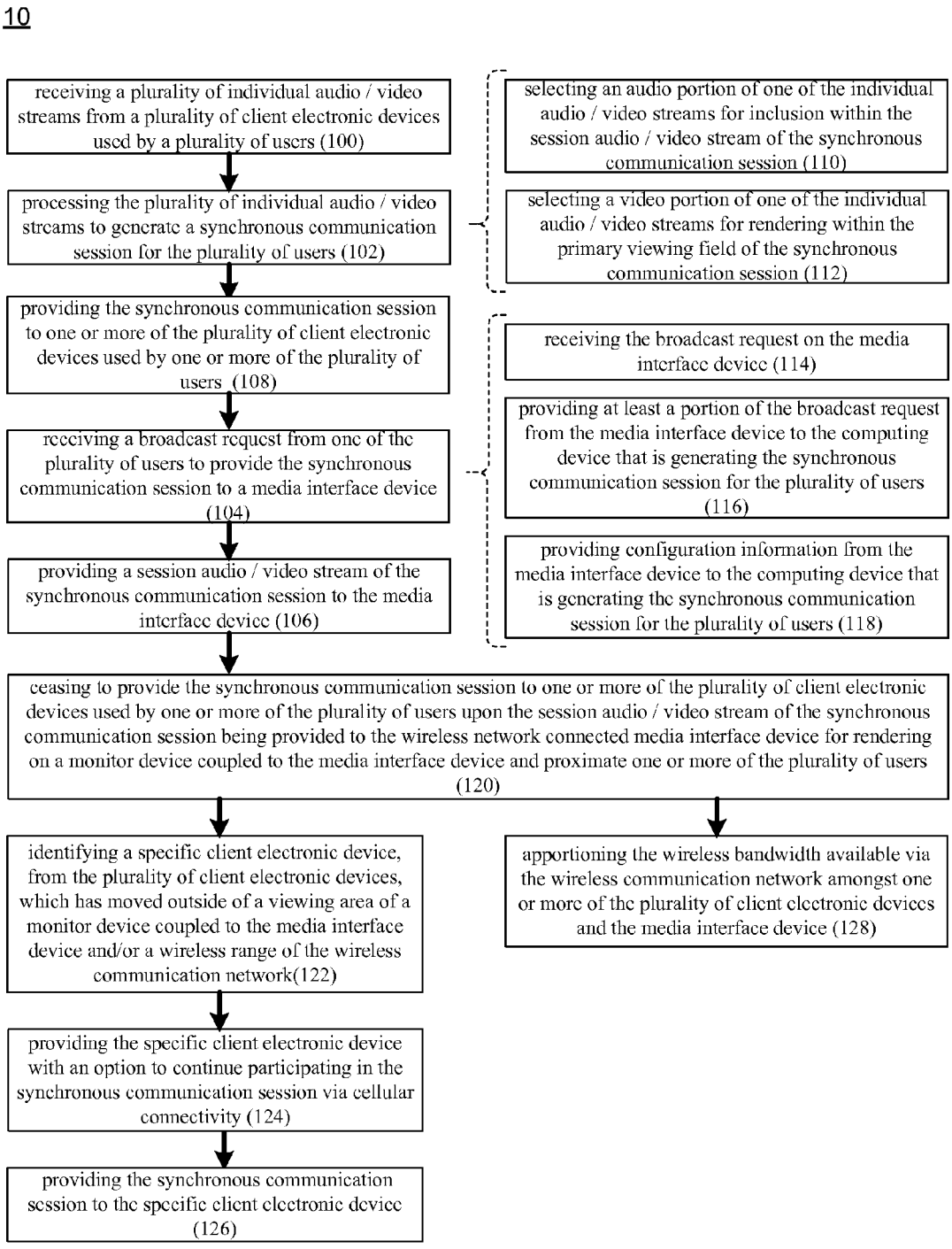

10
receiving a plurality of individual audio / video streams from a plurality of client electronic devices used by a plurality of users (100)
processing the plurality of individual audio / video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users (102)
providing the synchronous communication session to one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices used by one or more of the plurality of users (108)
receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device (104)
providing a session audio / video stream of the synchronous communication session to the media interface device (106)
selecting an audio portion of one of the individual audio / video streams for inclusion within the session audio / video stream of the synchronous communication session (110)
selecting a video portion of one of the individual audio / video streams for rendering within the primary viewing field of the synchronous communication session (112)
receiving the broadcast request on the media interface device (114)
providing at least a portion of the broadcast request from the media interface device to the computing device that is generating the synchronous communication session for the plurality of users (116)
providing configuration information from the media interface device to the computing device that is generating the synchronous communication session for the plurality of users (118)
ceasing to provide the synchronous communication session to one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices used by one or more of the plurality of users upon the session audio / video stream of the synchronous communication session being provided to the wireless network connected media interface device for rendering on a monitor device coupled to the media interface device and proximate one or more of the plurality of users (120)
identifying a specific client electronic device, from the plurality of client electronic devices, which has moved outside of a viewing area of a monitor device coupled to the media interface device and/or a wireless range of the wireless communication network(122)
providing the specific client electronic device with an option to continue participating in the synchronous communication session via cellular connectivity (124)
providing the synchronous communication session to the specific client electronic device (126)
apportioning the wireless bandwidth available via the wireless communication network amongst one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices and the media interface device (128)

FIG. 2

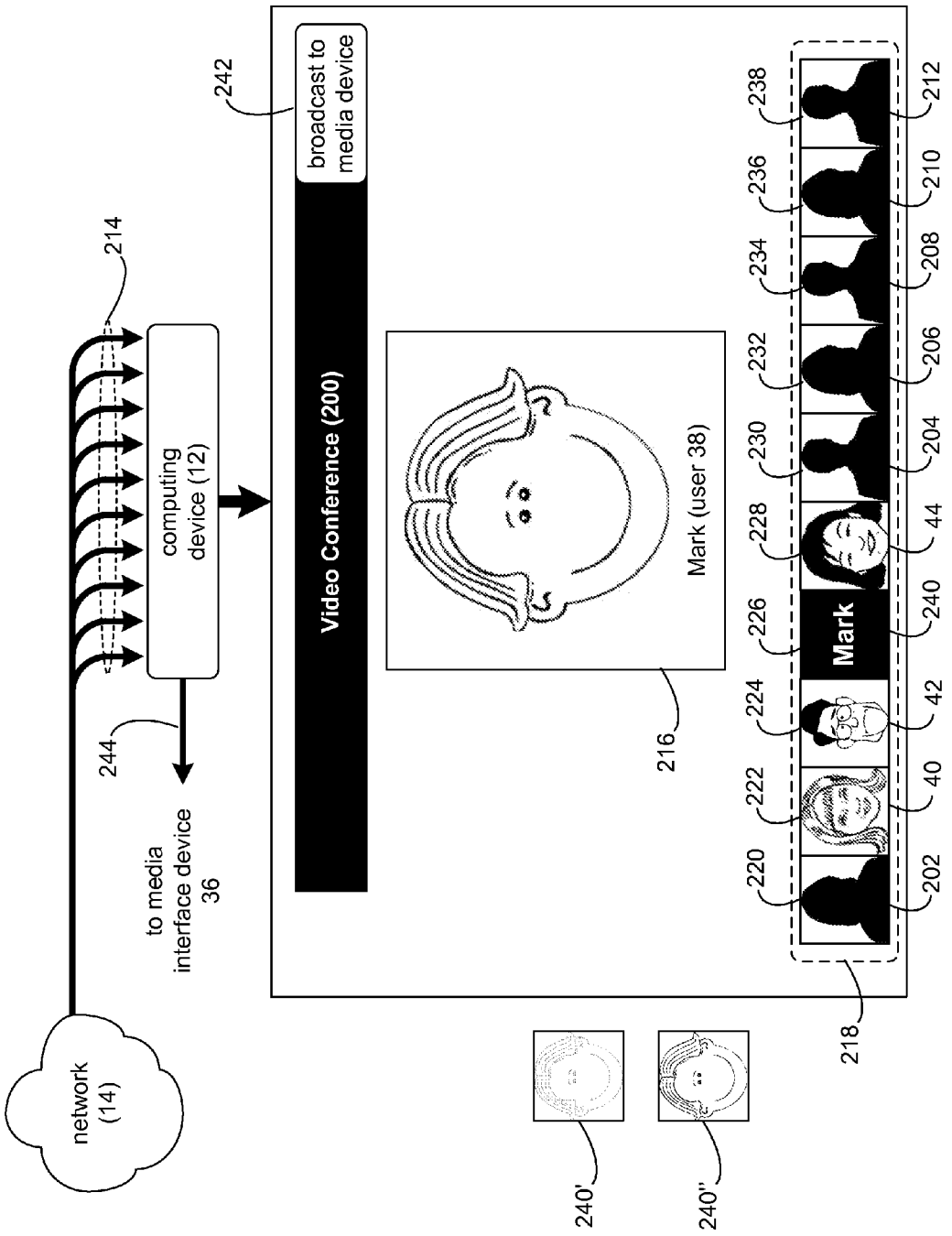

network (14)
to media interface device 36
computing device (12)
214
244
Video Conference (200)
broadcast to media device
242
Mark (user 38)
216
Mark
218
240'
240''
202
204
206
208
210
212
220
222
224
226
228
230
232
234
236
238
40
42
44

FIG. 3

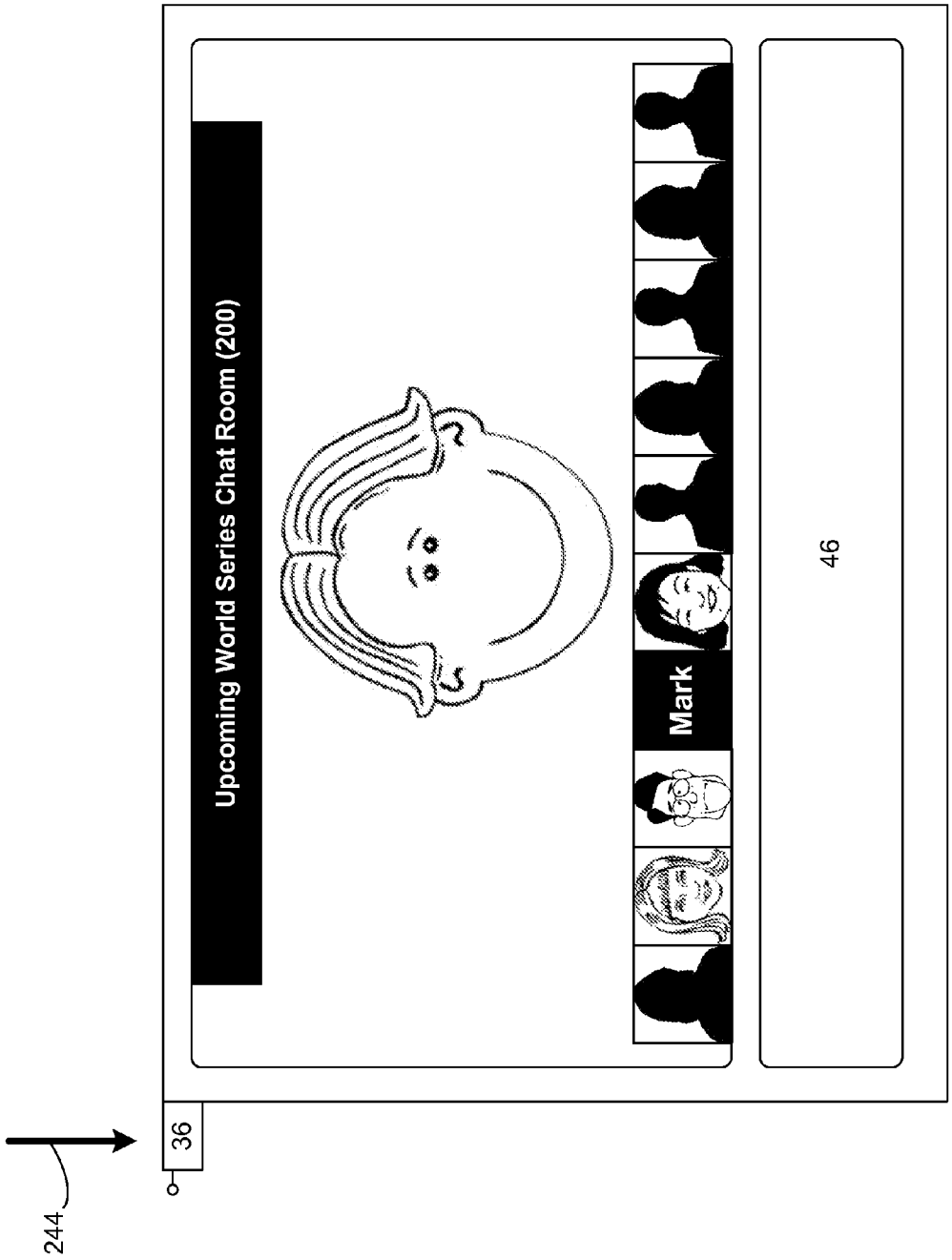


FIG. 4

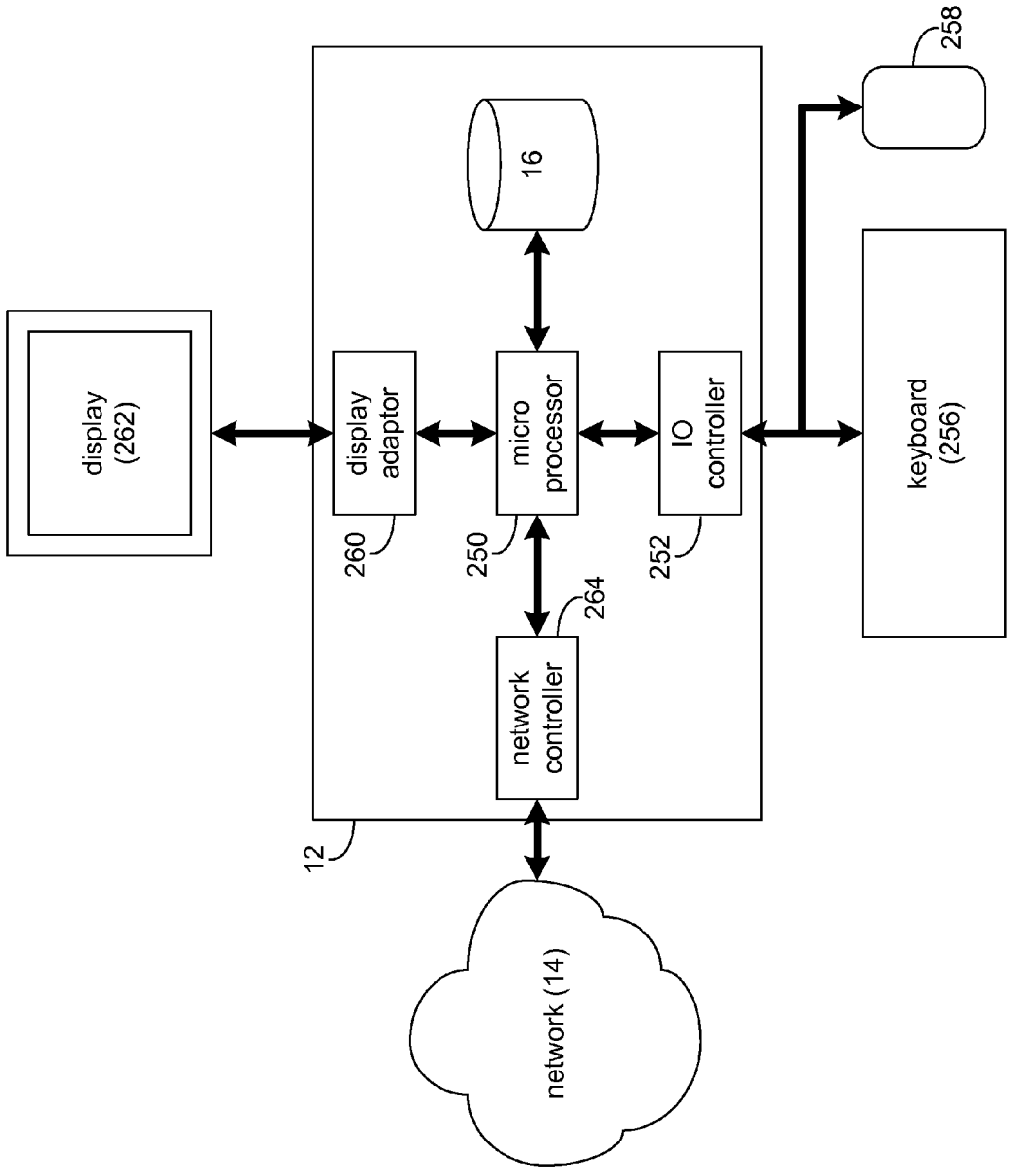

display (262)
display adaptor
micro processor
IO controller
16
258
keyboard (256)
260
250
252
264
network controller
12
network (14)

FIG. 5

DISPLAY-BASED SYNCHRONOUS COMMUNICATION

TECHNICAL FIELD

This disclosure relates to synchronous communication systems and, more particularly, to display-based synchronous communication systems.

BACKGROUND

The Internet currently allows for the free exchange of ideas and information in a manner that was unimaginable only a couple of decades ago. One such use for the Internet is as a communication medium, whether it is via one-on-one exchanges or multi-party exchanges. For example, two individuals may exchange private emails with each other. Alternatively, multiple people may participate on a public website in which they may post entries that are published for multiple people to read. Examples of such websites may include but are not limited to product/service review sites and topical blogs.

As is known in the art, the Internet may also allow users to engage in a quasi-real-time, interactive dialogue. For example and through the use of the Internet, users may engage in synchronous communication sessions (e.g., video conferences). Unfortunately, such synchronous communication sessions may require the use of proprietary (and costly) video conferencing equipment such as e.g., specialized systems that incorporate video display equipment (e.g., a monitor), video capture equipment (e.g., a video camera), and audio capture equipment (e.g., a microphone).

SUMMARY OF DISCLOSURE

In one implementation, a computer-implemented method includes receiving, on a computing device, a plurality of individual audio/video streams from a plurality of client electronic devices used by a plurality of users. The plurality of individual audio/video streams are processed, on the computing device, to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users. A broadcast request is received, on the computing device, from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device. A session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session is provided, via the computing device, to the media interface device. The session audio/video stream includes at least a portion of the plurality of individual audio/video streams. The media interface device is coupled to a display monitor and is configured to render the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session on the display monitor. Processing the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users includes selecting an audio portion of one of the individual audio/video streams for inclusion within the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session.

In another implementation, a computer-implemented method includes receiving, on a computing device, a plurality of individual audio/video streams from a plurality of client electronic devices used by a plurality of users. The plurality of individual audio/video streams are processed, on the computing device, to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users. A broadcast request is received, on the computing device, from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device. A session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session is provided, via the computing device, to the media interface device, wherein the session audio/video stream includes at least a portion of the plurality of individual audio/video streams.

One or more of the following features may be included. The media interface device may be coupled to a display monitor and may be configured to render the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session on the display monitor. Receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device may include receiving the broadcast request on the media interface device. Receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device may further include providing at least a portion of the broadcast request from the media interface device to the computing device that is generating the synchronous communication session for the plurality of users. Receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device may further include providing configuration information from the media interface device to the computing device that is generating the synchronous communication session for the plurality of users. The configuration information may define one or more capabilities of a monitor device coupled to the media interface device.

Processing the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users may include selecting an audio portion of one of the individual audio/video streams for inclusion within the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session. The synchronous communication session may include a primary viewing field. Processing the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users may include selecting a video portion of one of the individual audio/video streams for rendering within the primary viewing field of the synchronous communication session. The synchronous communication session may include a secondary viewing field that includes a plurality of portions, within which video portions of the remaining individual audio/video streams are rendered. The primary viewing field may be larger than each of the plurality of portions of the secondary viewing field.

One or more of the plurality of client electronic devices and the media interface device may be coupled via a wireless communication network. The wireless bandwidth available via the wireless communication network may be apportioned amongst one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices and the media interface device. A specific client electronic device may be identified, from the plurality of client electronic devices, which has moved outside of a viewing area of a monitor device coupled to the media interface device and/or a wireless range of the wireless communication network. The specific client electronic device may be provided with an option to continue participating in the synchronous communication session via cellular connectivity. The synchronous communication session may be provided to the specific client electronic device.

The synchronous communication session may be provided to one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices used by one or more of the plurality of users during the processing of the broadcast request. The synchronous communication session may cease to be provided to one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices used by one or more of the plurality of users upon the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session being provided to the wireless network connected media interface

device for rendering on a monitor device coupled to the media interface device and proximate one or more of the plurality of users.

In another implementation, a computer-implemented method includes receiving, on a computing device, a plurality of individual audio/video streams from a plurality of client electronic devices used by a plurality of users. The plurality of individual audio/video streams are processed, on the computing device, to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users. A broadcast request is received, on the computing device, from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device. A session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session is provided, via the computing device, to the media interface device, wherein the session audio/video stream includes at least a portion of the plurality of individual audio/video streams.

One or more of the following features may be included. The media interface device may be coupled to a display monitor and may be configured to render the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session on the display monitor. Receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device may include receiving the broadcast request on the media interface device. Receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device may further include providing at least a portion of the broadcast request from the media interface device to the computing device that is generating the synchronous communication session for the plurality of users. Receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device may further include providing configuration information from the media interface device to the computing device that is generating the synchronous communication session for the plurality of users. The configuration information may define one or more capabilities of a monitor device coupled to the media interface device.

Processing the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users may include selecting an audio portion of one of the individual audio/video streams for inclusion within the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session. The synchronous communication session may include a primary viewing field. Processing the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users may include selecting a video portion of one of the individual audio/video streams for rendering within the primary viewing field of the synchronous communication session. The synchronous communication session may include a secondary viewing field that includes a plurality of portions, within which video portions of the remaining individual audio/video streams are rendered. The primary viewing field may be larger than each of the plurality of portions of the secondary viewing field.

One or more of the plurality of client electronic devices and the media interface device may be coupled via a wireless communication network. The wireless bandwidth available via the wireless communication network may be apportioned amongst one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices and the media interface device. A specific client electronic device may be identified, from the plurality of client electronic devices, which has moved outside of a viewing area of a monitor device coupled to the media interface device and/or a wireless range of the wireless communication network. The specific client electronic device may be provided with an option to continue participating in the synchronous communication session via cellular connectivity. The synchronous communication session may be provided to the specific client electronic device.

The synchronous communication session may be provided to one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices used by one or more of the plurality of users during the processing of the broadcast request. The synchronous communication session may cease to be provided to one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices used by one or more of the plurality of users upon the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session being provided to the wireless network connected media interface device for rendering on a monitor device coupled to the media interface device and proximate one or more of the plurality of users.

The details of one or more implementations are set forth in the accompanying drawings and the description below. Other features and advantages will become apparent from the description, the drawings, and the claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a diagrammatic view of a distributed computing network including a computing device that executes a synchronous communication process according to an embodiment of the present disclosure;

FIG. **2** is a flowchart of the synchronous communication process of FIG. **1** according to an embodiment of the present disclosure;

FIG. **3** is a diagrammatic view of a display screen rendered by the synchronous communication process of FIG. **1** according to an embodiment of the present disclosure;

FIG. **4** is a diagrammatic view of another display screen rendered by the synchronous communication process of FIG. **1** according to an embodiment of the present disclosure; and

FIG. **5** is a diagrammatic view of the computing device of FIG. **1** according to an embodiment of the present disclosure.

Like reference symbols in the various drawings indicate like elements.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

System Overview

In FIGS. **1** & **2**, there is shown synchronous communication process **10**. Synchronous communication process **10** may be implemented as a server-side process, a client-side process, or a hybrid server-side/client-side process. For example, synchronous communication process **10** may be implemented as a purely server-side process via synchronous communication process **10***s*. Alternatively, synchronous communication process **10** may be implemented as a purely client-side process via one or more of synchronous communication process **10***c***1**, synchronous communication process **10***c***2**, synchronous communication process **10***c***3**, synchronous communication process **10***c***4**, and synchronous communication process **10***c***5**. Alternatively still, synchronous communication process **10** may be implemented as a hybrid server-side/client-side process via synchronous communication process **10***s* in combination with one or more of synchronous communication process **10***c***1**, synchronous communication process **10***c***2**, synchronous communication process **10***c***3**, synchronous communication process **10***c***4**, and synchronous communication process **10***c***5**. Accordingly, synchronous communication process **10** as used in this disclosure may include any combination of synchronous

communication process **10***s*, synchronous communication process **10***c***1**, synchronous communication process **10***c***2**, synchronous communication process **10***c***3**, synchronous communication process **10***c***4**, and synchronous communication process **10***c***5**.

As will be discussed below in greater detail, synchronous communication process **10** may receive **100** a plurality of individual audio/video streams from a plurality of client electronic devices used by a plurality of users. The plurality of individual audio/video streams may be processed **102** by synchronous communication process **10** to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users. Synchronous communication process **10** may receive **104** a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device. A session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session may be provided **106** by synchronous communication process **10** to the media interface device, wherein the session audio/video stream includes at least a portion of the plurality of individual audio/video streams.

Synchronous communication process **10***s* may be a server application and may reside on and may be executed by computing device **12**, which may be connected to network **14** (e.g., the Internet, a local area network, a wide area network, an intranet, or any combination thereof). Examples of computing device **12** may include, but are not limited to: a personal computer, a laptop computer, a tablet computer, a personal digital assistant, a data-enabled cellular telephone, a notebook computer, a television with one or more processors embedded therein or coupled thereto, a server computer, a series of server computers, a mini computer, a mainframe computer, a server cloud, or a dedicated network device.

The instruction sets and subroutines of synchronous communication process **10***s*, which may be stored on storage device **16** coupled to computing device **12**, may be executed by one or more processors (not shown) and one or more memory architectures (not shown) included within computing device **12**. Examples of storage device **16** may include but are not limited to: a hard disk drive; a tape drive; an optical drive; a RAID device; a random access memory (RAM); a read-only memory (ROM); and all forms of flash memory storage devices.

Examples of synchronous communication processes **10***c***1**, **10***c***2**, **10***c***3**, **10***c***4**, **10***c***5** may include but are not limited to a web browser, a game console user interface, a social network user interface, a video conference user interface, or a specialized application. The instruction sets and subroutines of synchronous communication processes **10***c***1**, **10***c***2**, **10***c***3**, **10***c***4**, **10***c***5** which may be stored on storage devices **18**, **20**, **22**, **24**, **26** (respectively) coupled to client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34** and media interface device **36** (respectively), may be executed by one or more processors (not shown) and one or more memory architectures (not shown) incorporated into client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34** and media interface device **36** (respectively). Examples of storage devices **18**, **20**, **22**, **24**, **26** may include but are not limited to: hard disk drives; tape drives; optical drives; RAID devices; random access memories (RAM); read-only memories (ROM), and all forms of flash memory storage devices.

Examples of client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34** may include, but are not limited to, data-enabled, cellular telephone **28**, data-enabled, cellular telephone **30**, tablet computer **32**, tablet computer **34**, a personal digital assistant (not shown), a personal computer (not shown), a laptop computer (not shown), a notebook computer (not shown), a server computer (not shown), a gaming console (not shown), a smart television (not shown) and a dedicated network device (not shown). Client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34** may each execute an operating system. Users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** may utilize client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34** to access synchronous communication process **10** through network **14**.

Media interface device **36** may be configured to interface a media device (e.g., display monitor **46**) with synchronous communication process **10***s*, network **14** and the various resources available thereon. Specifically, media interface device **36** may be configured to be releasably coupled to display monitor **46** through e.g., an HDMI (High Definition Multimedia Interface) port (not shown) included within display monitor **46**. Media interface device **36** may be self-configurable based upon data (concerning e.g., screen size, aspect ratio, screen resolution) obtained from display monitor **46**. Further, media interface device **36** may be configured to render the above-described session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session on display monitor **46**.

One specific and non-limiting example of media interface device **36** is the Google™ Chromecast™ device that allows for the displaying (on a television) of Internet-based content received through a wireless network from a nearby client electronic device or directly from the Internet.

The various client electronic devices (e.g., client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34**) and media interface device **36** may be directly or indirectly coupled to network **14**. For example, data-enabled, cellular telephone **28**, data-enabled, cellular telephone **30**, tablet computer **32**, tablet computer **34**, and media interface device **36** are shown wirelessly coupled to network **14** via wireless communication channels (not shown) established between these client electronic devices (e.g., data-enabled, cellular telephone **28**, data-enabled, cellular telephone **30**, tablet computer **32**, tablet computer **34**, and media interface device **36**) and wireless access point (i.e., WAP) **48**, which is shown directly coupled to network **14**. Alternatively, one or more of these client electronic devices (e.g., data-enabled, cellular telephone **28**, data-enabled, cellular telephone **30**, tablet computer **32**, tablet computer **34**, and media interface device **36**) may be wirelessly coupled to network **14** via wireless communication channel(s) (not shown) established between these client electronic devices and cellular network/bridge **50**, which is shown directly coupled to network **14**. Additionally, one or more of these client electronic devices (e.g., data-enabled, cellular telephone **28**, data-enabled, cellular telephone **30**, tablet computer **32**, tablet computer **34**, and media interface device **36**) may be hardwired to network **14**.

WAP **48** may be, for example, an IEEE 802.11a, 802.11b, 802.11g, 802.11n, Wi-Fi, and/or Bluetooth device that is capable of establishing wireless communication channel(s) between these client electronic devices (e.g., data-enabled, cellular telephone **28**, data-enabled, cellular telephone **30**, tablet computer **32**, tablet computer **34**, and media interface device **36**) and WAP **48**. As is known in the art, IEEE 802.11x specifications may use Ethernet protocol and carrier sense multiple access with collision avoidance (i.e., CSMA/CA) for path sharing. The various 802.11x specifications may use phase-shift keying (i.e., PSK) modulation or complementary code keying (i.e., CCK) modulation, for example. As is known in the art, Bluetooth is a telecommunications industry specification that allows e.g., mobile phones, tablet computers, personal computers, and personal digital assistants to be interconnected using a short-range wireless connection.

Synchronous Communication Process

Synchronous communication process **10** may be a stand-alone application that may be configured to host synchronous communication sessions (e.g., video conferences). Alternatively, synchronous communication process **10** may be

included within, executed within, or a portion of social network **52**. Further, synchronous communication process **10** may be a stand-alone application that may be configured to interface with social network **52**, enabling social network **52** to host synchronous communication sessions (e.g., video conferences).

Referring also to FIG. **3**, assume for illustrative purposes that Mark (user **38**), Mary (user **40**), Joe (user **42**), and Cindy (user **44**) are coworkers and wish to participate in a synchronous communication session (e.g., a video conference) so that they may discuss various projects on which they are working. Accordingly and for this illustrative example, assume that user **38** utilizes synchronous communication process **10** to effectuate synchronous communication session **200**.

While the following discussion concerns synchronous communication session **200** being an audio-video, synchronous communication session, this is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to be a limitation of this disclosure, as other configurations are possible (e.g., a multi-user, video conference that includes one or more audio-only participants) and are considered to be within the scope of this disclosure.

As will be discussed below in greater detail, synchronous communication process **10** may be configured to provide **108** synchronous communication session **200** for users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**. Assume for illustrative purposes that additional users are also participating in synchronous communication session **200**, namely users **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**.

Accordingly, synchronous communication process **10** may receive **100** a plurality of individual audio/video streams (e.g., individual audio/video streams **214**) from a plurality of client electronic devices used by a plurality of users (e.g., users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**, **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**). Accordingly and for this example, ten audio/video streams are shown to be included within individual audio/video streams **214**, wherein a separate audio/video streams is generated by the client electronic device used by each of the users (namely users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**, **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**). Assume for this example that each of these client electronic devices includes a camera (not shown) for generating the video portion of the individual audio/video stream; and a microphone (not shown) for generating the audio portion of the individual audio/video stream.

Synchronous communication process **10** may process **102** the plurality of individual audio/video streams (e.g., individual audio/video streams **214**) to generate synchronous communication session **200** for the plurality of users (namely users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**, **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**). Synchronous communication process **10** may provide **108** synchronous communication session **200** to the plurality of client electronic devices used by the plurality of users (namely users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**, **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**). For example, synchronous communication process **10** may provide **108** synchronous communication session **200** to: client electronic device **28** for user **38**; client electronic device **30** for user **40**; client electronic device **32** for user **42**; and client electronic device **34** for user **44**. Synchronous communication session **200** may be based, at least in part, upon the plurality of individual audio/video streams (e.g., individual audio/video streams **214**).

Synchronous communication process **10** may render synchronous communication session **200** to include a primary viewing field (e.g., primary viewing field **216**) and a secondary viewing field (e.g., secondary viewing field **218**). Secondary viewing field **218** may include a plurality of portions (e.g., one for each of the participants of synchronous communication session **200**). While in this particular example secondary viewing field **218** is shown to include ten portions (namely portions **220**, **222**, **224**, **226**, **228**, **230**, **232**, **234**, **236**, **238**), this is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to be a limitation of this disclosure, as other configurations are possible and are considered to be within the scope of this disclosure. Specifically, the quantity of portions included within secondary viewing field **218** may be increased/decreased depending on the number of users participating in synchronous communication session **200**.

Synchronous communication process **10** may be configured to include, within synchronous communication session **200**, the audio of the user that is currently addressing the other users of synchronous communication session **200**. Accordingly, when processing **102** the plurality of individual audio/video streams (e.g., individual audio/video streams **214**) to generate synchronous communication session **200**, synchronous communication process **10** may select **110** an audio portion of one of the individual audio/video streams for inclusion within synchronous communication session **200**. Assume for illustrative purposes that when synchronous communication session **200** is started, user **38** leads off the discussion. Accordingly and for this particular example, the audio portion of the individual audio/video stream of user **38** (included within individual audio/video streams **214**) may be selected **110** by synchronous communication process **10** for inclusion within synchronous communication session **200**. Further, whenever one of the other users (e.g., users **40**, **42**, **44**, **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**) speaks within synchronous communication session **200**, synchronous communication process **10** may be configured to automatically include the audio portion of the individual audio/video stream associated with the speaking user within synchronous communication session **200**.

Additionally, synchronous communication process **10** may be configured to provide visual prominence to the user that is currently addressing synchronous communication session **200**. Continuing with the above-stated example, in which user **38** leads off the discussion, synchronous communication process **10** may provide visual prominence to user **38**, as user **38** is currently addressing the remaining users (e.g., users **40**, **42**, **44**, **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**) of the plurality of users within synchronous communication session **200**.

Accordingly, when processing **102** the plurality of individual audio/video streams (e.g., individual audio/video streams **214**) to generate synchronous communication session **200**, synchronous communication process **10** may select **112** a video portion of one of the individual audio/video streams for rendering within primary viewing field **216** of synchronous communication session **200**. Therefore and for this particular example, the video portion of the individual audio/video stream of user **38** (included within individual audio/video streams **214**) may be selected **112** by synchronous communication process **10** for rendering within primary viewing field **216**. Further, whenever one of the other users (e.g., users **40**, **42**, **44**, **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**) addresses synchronous communication session **200**, synchronous communication process **10** may be configured to automatically position the video stream associated with the addressing user within primary viewing field **216**.

When selecting **110** the audio portion (of one of the individual audio/video streams) for inclusion within synchronous communication session **200** and/or selecting **112** the video portion (of one of the individual audio/video streams) for rendering within primary viewing field **216**, synchronous communication process **10** may utilize various methodologies.

For example and as discussed above, data-enabled, cellular telephone **28**, data-enabled, cellular telephone **30**, tablet com-

puter **32**, and tablet computer **34** may include microphones (not shown) that may allow users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** to participate in the audio portion of synchronous communication session **200**. Accordingly and concerning selecting **110** the audio portion for inclusion within synchronous communication session **200**; synchronous communication process **10** may monitor the audio signal levels present on these microphones to determine (in whole or in part) whether one or more of users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** is speaking. In such a situation, particularly if users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** are proximately located within the same room, the microphones of the non-speaking users participating in synchronous communication session **200** may be muted. When selecting **110** the audio portion for inclusion within synchronous communication session **200**; synchronous communication process **10** may determine the audio quality of each of the client electronic devices providing audio to synchronous communication session **200** and may select **110** the audio portion for inclusion within synchronous communication session **200** based (in whole or in part) upon such audio quality determination. Accordingly, synchronous communication session **200** may rely on the microphones included in only one or two client electronic devices for selection of audio signals from all users (e.g., **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**) proximately located within the same room. Alternatively, synchronous communication process **10** may be configured to allow the users of synchronous communication session **200** to individually activate/deactivate their microphones.

Further and as discussed above, data-enabled, cellular telephone **28**, data-enabled, cellular telephone **30**, tablet computer **32**, and tablet computer **34** may include video cameras (not shown) that may allow users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** to participate in the video portion of synchronous communication session **200**. Accordingly and concerning selecting **112** the video portion for rendering within primary viewing field **216**; synchronous communication process **10** may process the video signal generated by these video cameras to determine (in whole or in part) whether one or more of users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** is looking into their respective client electronic device (e.g., using facial recognition methodologies). Additionally, synchronous communication process **10** may process the video signal generated by these video cameras to determine (in whole or in part) whether the mouths of one or more of users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** is moving (which is indicative of that user speaking). Therefore and in such a configuration, synchronous communication process **10** may provide visual prominence to a user that is addressing synchronous communication session **200**, even if the microphone associated with that user is muted.

As discussed above, synchronous communication session **200** may include secondary viewing field **218**, which may include a plurality of portions (e.g., one for each of the participants of synchronous communication session **200**). Since and as discussed above, synchronous communication process **10** may provide visual prominence to the user that is currently addressing the remaining users within synchronous communication session **200**, primary viewing field **216** may be larger than each of the plurality of portions (namely portions **220**, **222**, **224**, **226**, **228**, **230**, **232**, **234**, **236**, **238**) included within the secondary viewing field **218**.

Synchronous communication process **10** may render a placeholder (e.g., placeholder **240**) for the user (e.g., user **38**) who is currently addressing synchronous communication session **200** within a first portion (e.g., portion **226**) of secondary viewing field **218**. Placeholder **240** may include information concerning user **38**. Examples of such information may include but is not limited to one or more of: identification information for user **38** (e.g., name and title); and/or contact information for user **38** (e.g., an email address, a mailing address, a home phone number, an office phone number, a cell phone number, a social network user name, or a webpage).

Alternatively, placeholder **240** for user **38** may include a partially-obscured, reduced-scale version of the video portion associated with user **38**. An example of such a partially-obscured, reduced-scale version of the video portion associated with user **38** may include but is not limited to a grayed-out version (e.g., alternate placeholder **240'**) of the video portion associated with user **38**.

Alternatively still, placeholder **240** for user **38** may include a reduced-scale version of the video portion associated with user **38**. An example of such a reduced-scale version of the video portion associated with user **38** may include but is not limited to a smaller version (e.g., alternate placeholder **240"**) of the video portion associated with user **38**.

Further, synchronous communication process **10** may render a video stream of the remaining users of the plurality of users (e.g., users **40**, **42**, **44**, **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**) within the plurality of portions of secondary viewing field **218**. Specifically: a video stream for user **202** may be rendered within portion **220** of secondary viewing field **218**; a video stream for user **40** may be rendered within portion **222** of secondary viewing field **218**; a video stream for user **42** may be rendered within portion **224** of secondary viewing field **218**; a video stream for user **44** may be rendered within portion **228** of secondary viewing field **218**; a video stream for user **204** may be rendered within portion **230** of secondary viewing field **218**; a video stream for user **206** may be rendered within portion **232** of secondary viewing field **218**; a video stream for user **208** may be rendered within portion **234** of secondary viewing field **218**; a video stream for user **210** may be rendered within portion **236** of secondary viewing field **218**; and a video stream for user **212** may be rendered within portion **238** of secondary viewing field **218**.

As discussed above, synchronous communication process **10** may receive **104** a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users (e.g., users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**, **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**) to provide synchronous communication session **200** to media interface device **36**. And in response to this broadcast request, synchronous communication process **10** may provide **106** a session audio/video stream of synchronous communication session **200** to media interface device **36**, wherein the session audio/video stream includes at least a portion of the plurality of individual audio/video streams (e.g., individual audio/video streams **214**).

Accordingly, assume for illustrative purposes that users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** are participating in synchronous communication session **200** from a common room that includes media interface device **36** (which is coupled to display monitor **46**). Further, assume that user **38** would like synchronous communication session **200** to be rendered on display monitor **46** (due to display monitor **46** having a larger screen than client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34**).

Accordingly, user **38** may select (by tapping or clicking) "broadcast to media device" button **242**, resulting in the generation of broadcast request **54**, which (in this example) may be provided to synchronous communication process **10** via e.g., network **14**. Upon receiving **104** broadcast request **54** from one of the users (e.g., user **38**) to provide synchronous communication session **200** to media interface device **36**, synchronous communication process **10** may provide **106** session audio/video stream **244** of synchronous communication session **200** to media interface device **36**, wherein session audio/video stream **244** includes at least a portion of the plurality of individual audio/video streams (e.g., individual audio/video streams **214**).

As discussed above, media interface device **36** may be configured to be releasably coupled to display monitor **46** through e.g., an HDMI (High Definition Multimedia Interface) port (not shown) included within display monitor **46**. Accordingly, when such an HDMI port on display monitor **46** is selected for use by media interface device **36**, session audio/video stream **244** of synchronous communication session **200** may be rendered upon the screen of display monitor **46** (as shown in FIG. **4**). Accordingly, session audio/video stream **244** of synchronous communication session **200** may be configured to provide synchronous communication session **200** to users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** when rendered upon display monitor **46** by media interface device **36**.

Receiving **104** broadcast request **54** from user **38** to provide synchronous communication session **200** to media interface device **36** may include receiving **114** broadcast request **54** on media interface device **36** and providing **116** at least a portion of broadcast request **54** (as represented by broadcast request **54'**) from media interface device **36** to the computing device (e.g., computing device **12**) that is generating synchronous communication session **200** for the plurality of users (e.g., users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**, **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**). Accordingly, media interface device **36** may directly negotiate with synchronous communication process **10** so that synchronous communication process **10** may provide **106** session audio/video stream **244** of synchronous communication session **200** to media interface device **36** (for rendering upon display monitor **46**).

Additionally, when receiving **104** broadcast request **54** from user **38** to provide synchronous communication session **200** to media interface device **36**, synchronous communication process **10** may provide **118** configuration information (e.g., information **56**) from media interface device **36** to the computing device (e.g., computing device **12**) that is generating synchronous communication session **200** for the plurality of users (e.g., users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**, **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**). This configuration information (e.g., information **56**) may define one or more capabilities (e.g., screen size, aspect ratio, screen resolution) of the monitor device (e.g., display monitor **46**) coupled to media interface device **36**. As discussed above, media interface device **36** may be self-configurable based upon data (concerning e.g., screen size, aspect ratio, screen resolution) obtained from display monitor **46**. This data (in the form of information **56**) may be provided to computing device **12** so that session audio/video stream **244** of synchronous communication session **200** may be properly formatted for media interface device **36** and/or display monitor **46**. Additionally, such configuration information may be provided to the client electronic devices used by the users (e.g., users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**, **202**, **204**, **206**, **208**, **210**, **212**) so that individual audio/video streams **214** may be properly formatted for media interface device **36** and/or display monitor **46**.

As discussed above, synchronous communication process **10** may provide **108** synchronous communication session **200** to: client electronic device **28** for user **38**; client electronic device **30** for user **40**; client electronic device **32** for user **42**; and client electronic device **34** for user **44**. Further, synchronous communication process **10** may continue to provide **108** synchronous communication session **200** to these client electronic devices during the processing of broadcast request **54**. Once session audio/video stream **244** of synchronous communication session **200** is being provided to media interface device **36**, synchronous communication process **10** may cease **120** to provide synchronous communication session **200** to the plurality of client electronic devices (e.g., client electronic device **28**, **30**, **32**, **34**) used by the plurality of users (e.g., users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**). Specifically, since client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34** (as used by users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**) are positioned proximate to media interface device **36** and display monitor **46**, users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44** may watch synchronous communication session **200** on display monitor **46**. Accordingly, synchronous communication session **200** may no longer need to be provided to client electronic device **28**, **30**, **32**, **34**. Therefore and through such a configuration, the users (e.g., users **38**, **40**, **42**, **44**) of client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34** will always be able to view synchronous communication session **200** (either on their client electronic device or on display monitor **46**).

In order to ensure a timely and synchronized handoff of synchronous communication session **200** from client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34** to media interface device **36**/display monitor **46**, synchronous communication process **10** may utilize various methodologies. For example, synchronous communication process **10** may be configured to overcome any downlink latency (concerning media interface device **36**/display monitor **46**). Such latency (if not accounted for) may introduce a pause between the time when the content is rendered on a client device (e.g., client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34**) and the time when the content is retrieved for presentation, buffered, and rendered on media interface device **36**/display monitor **46**. Accordingly, synchronous communication process **10** may include time stamp data within the content of synchronous communication session **200**, wherein this time stamp data may indicate the point at which the user (e.g., user **38**) intended to provide synchronous communication session **200** to media interface device **36**. Accordingly, this time stamp data may identify to media interface device **36** the point in time at which to resume playback of synchronous communication session **200** on media interface device **36**/display monitor **46** (relative to where such playback was left off at the client electronic devices). Such time stamp data may be generated by e.g., media interface device **36** or synchronous communication process **10**, wherein this time stamp data may be provided to the computing device (e.g., computing device **12**) that is generating synchronous communication session **200**. Such time stamp data may be appended to data representing a time count of anticipated latency of media interface device **36**/display monitor **46** (e.g., the time between receiving **104** broadcast request **54** and providing **106** session audio/video stream **244** of synchronous communication session **200** to media interface device **36**). Latency counts may be tracked for each client electronic device (as well as any associated media interface devices). Further, any additional client electronic devices initiating participation in synchronous communication session **200** may be sequenced to join synchronous communication session **200** at the appropriate point in time (as opposed to the point in time where broadcast request **54** was received **104**).

Accordingly and as discussed above, in order to prevent critical communication loss during this latency period, synchronous communication process **10** may continue to provide **108** synchronous communication session **200** to electronic device **28**, **30**, **32**, **34** until session audio/video stream **244** is being provided to media interface device **36**. The anticipated expiration of the latency period may be communicated to the client electronic device by synchronous communication process **10** based upon the data generated (as described above). Alternatively, media interface device **36** may be configured to communicate the anticipated expiration of the latency period to the client electronic devices (e.g., client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34**) over the above-described wireless network.

As discussed above, one or more of the client electronic devices (e.g., data-enabled, cellular telephone **28**, data-enabled, cellular telephone **30**, tablet computer **32**, and tablet computer **34**) may be wirelessly coupled to network **14** via wireless communication channel(s) (not shown) established between these client electronic devices and cellular network/bridge **50**. Accordingly, it is possible for one or more of e.g., data-enabled, cellular telephone **28**, data-enabled, cellular telephone **30**, tablet computer **32** and/or tablet computer **34** to move to an area that is outside of a viewing area of the monitor device (e.g., display monitor **46**) coupled to media interface device **36** and/or a wireless range of the above-described wireless communication network. For example, assume for illustrative purposes that user **40** needs to head to the airport to catch a flight to a business meeting. Accordingly, user **40** (and client electronic device **30**) will need to leave the room in which display monitor **46** is positioned.

Synchronous communication process **10** may identify **122** a specific client electronic device (e.g., client electronic device **30**) that has moved outside of the viewing area of the monitor device (e.g., display monitor **46**) coupled to media interface device **36** and/or the wireless range of the above-described wireless communication network. This identification **122** may be made by synchronous communication process **10** e.g., monitoring the signal strength of the wireless communication channel established between client electronic device **30** and WAP **48**, wherein a weak signal strength may be indicative of client electronic device **30** moving outside of the viewing area of display monitor **46** and/or the wireless range of the wireless communication network.

In the event that such an identification **122** is made, synchronous communication process **10** may provide **124** the specific client electronic device (e.g., client electronic device **30**) with an option to continue participating in synchronous communication session **200** via cellular connectivity (e.g., a cellular link established between client electronic device **30** and cellular network/bridge **50**. For example, synchronous communication process **10** may render the message ("Would you like to continue your Video Conference using Cellular Data?" on a display screen of client electronic device **30**. If user **40** chooses to continue their video conference using cellular data, synchronous communication process **10** may provide **126** synchronous communication session **200** to the specific client electronic device (e.g., client electronic device **30**) via the above-described cellular link.

As discussed above, one or more of the client electronic devices (e.g., data-enabled, cellular telephone **28**, data-enabled, cellular telephone **30**, tablet computer **32**, and tablet computer **34**) may be wirelessly coupled to network **14** via wireless communication channel(s) (not shown) established between these client electronic devices and cellular network/bridge **50**. Further and as discussed above, media interface device **36** may be wirelessly coupled to network **14** via a wireless communication channel (not shown) established between media interface device **36** and cellular network/bridge **50**. Accordingly, synchronous communication process **10** may be configured to apportion **128** the wireless bandwidth available via the wireless communication network amongst the plurality of client electronic devices and the media interface device. For example, synchronous communication process **10** and/or media interface device **36** may be configured to interface with WAP **48** to identify the wireless bandwidth available and may apportion **128** this available wireless bandwidth to provide a workable solution for data-enabled, cellular telephone **28**, data-enabled, cellular telephone **30**, tablet computer **32**, tablet computer **34** and media interface device **36**; such as e.g., prioritizing data transmissions to media interface device **36** and data transmission from the client electronic devices.

General

Referring also to FIG. **5**, there is shown a diagrammatic view of computing system **12**. While computing system **12** is shown in this figure, this is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to be a limitation of this disclosure, as other configuration are possible. For example, any computing device capable of executing, in whole or in part, synchronous communication process **10** may be substituted for computing device **12** within FIG. **5**, examples of which may include but are not limited to client electronic devices **28**, **30**, **32**, **34** and media interface device **36**.

Computing system **12** may include microprocessor **250** configured to e.g., process data and execute instructions/code for synchronous communication process **10**. Microprocessor **250** may be coupled to storage device **16**. As discussed above, examples of storage device **16** may include but are not limited to: a hard disk drive; a tape drive; an optical drive; a RAID device; an NAS device, a Storage Area Network, a random access memory (RAM); a read-only memory (ROM); and all forms of flash memory storage devices. IO controller **252** may be configured to couple microprocessor **250** with various devices, such as keyboard **256**, mouse **258**, USB ports (not shown), and printer ports (not shown). Display adaptor **260** may be configured to couple display **262** (e.g., a CRT or LCD monitor) with microprocessor **250**, while network adapter **264** (e.g., an Ethernet adapter) may be configured to couple microprocessor **250** to network **14** (e.g., the Internet or a local area network).

As will be appreciated by one skilled in the art, the present disclosure may be embodied as a method (e.g., executing in whole or in part on computing device **12**), a system (e.g., computing device **12**), or a computer program product (e.g., encoded within storage device **16**). Accordingly, the present disclosure may take the form of an entirely hardware embodiment, an entirely software embodiment (including firmware, resident software, micro-code, etc.) or an embodiment combining software and hardware aspects that may all generally be referred to herein as a "circuit," "module" or "system." Furthermore, the present disclosure may take the form of a computer program product on a computer-usable storage medium (e.g., storage device **16**) having computer-usable program code embodied in the medium.

Any suitable computer usable or computer readable medium (e.g., storage device **16**) may be utilized. The computer-usable or computer-readable medium may be, for example but not limited to, an electronic, magnetic, optical, electromagnetic, infrared, or semiconductor system, apparatus, device, or propagation medium. More specific examples (a non-exhaustive list) of the computer-readable medium may include the following: an electrical connection having one or more wires, a portable computer diskette, a hard disk, a random access memory (RAM), a read-only memory (ROM), an erasable programmable read-only memory (EPROM or Flash memory), an optical fiber, a portable compact disc read-only memory (CD-ROM), an optical storage device, a transmission media such as those supporting the Internet or an intranet, or a magnetic storage device. The computer-usable or computer-readable medium may also be paper or another suitable medium upon which the program is printed, as the program can be electronically captured, via, for instance, optical scanning of the paper or other medium, then compiled, interpreted, or otherwise processed in a suitable manner, if necessary, and then stored in a computer memory. In the context of this document, a computer-usable or computer-

readable medium may be any medium that can contain, store, communicate, propagate, or transport the program for use by or in connection with the instruction execution system, apparatus, or device. The computer-usable medium may include a propagated data signal with the computer-usable program code embodied therewith, either in baseband or as part of a carrier wave. The computer usable program code may be transmitted using any appropriate medium, including but not limited to the Internet, wireline, optical fiber cable, RF, etc.

Computer program code for carrying out operations of the present disclosure may be written in an object oriented programming language such as Java, Smalltalk, C++ or the like. However, the computer program code for carrying out operations of the present disclosure may also be written in conventional procedural programming languages, such as the "C" programming language or similar programming languages. The program code may execute entirely on the user's computer, partly on the user's computer, as a stand-alone software package, partly on the user's computer and partly on a remote computer or entirely on the remote computer or server. In the latter scenario, the remote computer may be connected to the user's computer through a local area network/a wide area network/the Internet (e.g., network **14**).

The present disclosure is described with reference to flowchart illustrations and/or block diagrams of methods, apparatus (systems) and computer program products according to embodiments of the disclosure. It will be understood that each block of the flowchart illustrations and/or block diagrams, and combinations of blocks in the flowchart illustrations and/or block diagrams, may be implemented by computer program instructions. These computer program instructions may be provided to a processor (e.g., processor **250**) of a general purpose computer/special purpose computer/other programmable data processing apparatus (e.g., computing device **12**), such that the instructions, which execute via the processor (e.g., processor **250**) of the computer or other programmable data processing apparatus, create means for implementing the functions/acts specified in the flowchart and/or block diagram block or blocks.

These computer program instructions may also be stored in a computer-readable memory (e.g., storage device **16**) that may direct a computer (e.g., computing device **12**) or other programmable data processing apparatus to function in a particular manner, such that the instructions stored in the computer-readable memory produce an article of manufacture including instruction means which implement the function/act specified in the flowchart and/or block diagram block or blocks.

The computer program instructions may also be loaded onto a computer (e.g., computing device **12**) or other programmable data processing apparatus to cause a series of operational steps to be performed on the computer or other programmable apparatus to produce a computer implemented process such that the instructions which execute on the computer or other programmable apparatus provide steps for implementing the functions/acts specified in the flowchart and/or block diagram block or blocks.

The flowcharts and block diagrams in the figures may illustrate the architecture, functionality, and operation of possible implementations of systems, methods and computer program products according to various embodiments of the present disclosure. In this regard, each block in the flowchart or block diagrams may represent a module, segment, or portion of code, which comprises one or more executable instructions for implementing the specified logical function (s). It should also be noted that, in some alternative implementations, the functions noted in the block may occur out of the order noted in the figures. For example, two blocks shown in succession may, in fact, be executed substantially concurrently, or the blocks may sometimes be executed in the reverse order, depending upon the functionality involved. It will also be noted that each block of the block diagrams and/or flowchart illustrations, and combinations of blocks in the block diagrams and/or flowchart illustrations, may be implemented by special purpose hardware-based systems that perform the specified functions or acts, or combinations of special purpose hardware and computer instructions.

The terminology used herein is for the purpose of describing particular embodiments only and is not intended to be limiting of the disclosure. As used herein, the singular forms "a", "an" and "the" are intended to include the plural forms as well, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. It will be further understood that the terms "comprises" and/or "comprising," when used in this specification, specify the presence of stated features, integers, steps, operations, elements, and/or components, but do not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, integers, steps, operations, elements, components, and/or groups thereof.

The corresponding structures, materials, acts, and equivalents of all means or step plus function elements in the claims below are intended to include any structure, material, or act for performing the function in combination with other claimed elements as specifically claimed. The description of the present disclosure has been presented for purposes of illustration and description, but is not intended to be exhaustive or limited to the disclosure in the form disclosed. Many modifications and variations will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art without departing from the scope and spirit of the disclosure. The embodiment was chosen and described in order to best explain the principles of the disclosure and the practical application, and to enable others of ordinary skill in the art to understand the disclosure for various embodiments with various modifications as are suited to the particular use contemplated.

Having thus described the disclosure of the present application in detail and by reference to embodiments thereof, it will be apparent that modifications and variations are possible without departing from the scope of the disclosure defined in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented method comprising:

receiving, on a computing device, a plurality of individual audio/video streams from a plurality of client electronic devices used by a plurality of users;

processing, on the computing device, the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users;

providing, via the computing device, the synchronous communication session to the plurality of client electronic devices;

receiving, on the computing device, a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device;

providing, via the computing device, a session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session to the media interface device, wherein:

the session audio/video stream includes at least a portion of the plurality of individual audio/video streams, and

the media interface device is coupled to a display monitor and is configured to render the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session on the display monitor; and

ceasing to provide the synchronous communication session to the one of the plurality of client electronic devices upon the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session being provided to the media interface device,

wherein processing the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users includes: selecting an audio portion of one of the individual audio/video streams for inclusion within the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session.

2. A computer-implemented method comprising:

receiving, on a computing device, a plurality of individual audio/video streams from a plurality of client electronic devices used by a plurality of users;

processing, on the computing device, the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users;

providing, via the computing device, the synchronous communication session to one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices used by one or more of the plurality of users;

receiving, on the computing device, a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device;

providing, via the computing device, a session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session to the media interface device, wherein the session audio/video stream includes at least a portion of the plurality of individual audio/video streams; and

ceasing to provide the synchronous communication session to one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices used by one or more of the plurality of users upon the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session being provided to the media interface device for rendering on a monitor device coupled to the media interface device and proximate one or more of the plurality of users.

3. The computer-implemented method of claim **2** wherein the media interface device is coupled to a display monitor and is configured to render the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session on the display monitor.

4. The computer-implemented method of claim **2** wherein receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device includes:

receiving the broadcast request on the media interface device.

5. The computer-implemented method of claim **4** wherein receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device further includes:

providing at least a portion of the broadcast request from the media interface device to the computing device that is generating the synchronous communication session for the plurality of users.

6. The computer-implemented method of claim **4** wherein receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device further includes:

providing configuration information from the media interface device to the computing device that is generating the synchronous communication session for the plurality of users, wherein the configuration information defines one or more capabilities of a monitor device coupled to the media interface device.

7. The computer-implemented method of claim **2** wherein processing the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users includes:

selecting an audio portion of one of the individual audio/video streams for inclusion within the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session.

8. The computer-implemented method of claim **2** wherein the synchronous communication session includes a primary viewing field.

9. The computer-implemented method of claim **8** wherein processing the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users includes:

selecting a video portion of one of the individual audio/video streams for rendering within the primary viewing field of the synchronous communication session.

10. The computer-implemented method of claim **9** wherein the synchronous communication session includes a secondary viewing field that includes a plurality of portions, within which video portions of the remaining individual audio/video streams are rendered.

11. The computer-implemented method of claim **10** wherein the primary viewing field is larger than each of the plurality of portions of the secondary viewing field.

12. The computer-implemented method of claim **2** wherein one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices and the media interface device are coupled via a wireless communication network, the computer-implemented method further comprising:

apportioning the wireless bandwidth available via the wireless communication network amongst one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices and the media interface device.

13. The computer-implemented method of claim **2** wherein one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices are coupled via a wireless communication network, the computer-implemented method further comprising:

identifying a specific client electronic device, from the plurality of client electronic devices, which has moved outside of a viewing area of a monitor device coupled to the media interface device and/or a wireless range of the wireless communication network.

14. The computer-implemented method of claim **13** further comprising:

providing the specific client electronic device with an option to continue participating in the synchronous communication session via cellular connectivity.

15. The computer-implemented method of claim **13** further comprising:

providing the synchronous communication session to the specific client electronic device.

16. The computer-implemented method of claim **2** further comprising:

providing the synchronous communication session to one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices used by one or more of the plurality of users during the processing of the broadcast request.

17. A computing system including a processor and memory configured to perform operations comprising:

receiving, on a computing device, a plurality of individual audio/video streams from a plurality of client electronic devices used by a plurality of users;

processing, on the computing device, the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users;

providing, via the computing device, the synchronous communication session to one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices used by one or more of the plurality of users;

receiving, on the computing device, a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device;

providing, via the computing device, a session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session to the media interface device, wherein the session audio/video stream includes at least a portion of the plurality of individual audio/video streams; and

ceasing to provide the synchronous communication session to one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices used by one or more of the plurality of users upon the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session being provided to the media interface device for rendering on a monitor device coupled to the media interface device and proximate one or more of the plurality of users.

18. The computing system of claim **17** wherein the media interface device is coupled to a display monitor and is configured to render the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session on the display monitor.

19. The computing system of claim **17** wherein receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device includes:

receiving the broadcast request on the media interface device.

20. The computing system of claim **19** wherein receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device further includes:

providing at least a portion of the broadcast request from the media interface device to the computing device that is generating the synchronous communication session for the plurality of users.

21. The computing system of claim **19** wherein receiving a broadcast request from one of the plurality of users to provide the synchronous communication session to a media interface device further includes:

providing configuration information from the media interface device to the computing device that is generating the synchronous communication session for the plurality of users, wherein the configuration information defines one or more capabilities of a monitor device coupled to the media interface device.

22. The computing system of claim **17** wherein processing the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users includes:

selecting an audio portion of one of the individual audio/video streams for inclusion within the session audio/video stream of the synchronous communication session.

23. The computing system of claim **17** wherein the synchronous communication session includes a primary viewing field.

24. The computing system of claim **23** wherein processing the plurality of individual audio/video streams to generate a synchronous communication session for the plurality of users includes:

selecting a video portion of one of the individual audio/video streams for rendering within the primary viewing field of the synchronous communication session.

25. The computing system of claim **24** wherein the synchronous communication session includes a secondary viewing field that includes a plurality of portions, within which video portions of the remaining individual audio/video streams are rendered.

26. The computing system of claim **25** wherein the primary viewing field is larger than each of the plurality of portions of the secondary viewing field.

27. The computing system of claim **17** wherein one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices and the media interface device are coupled via a wireless communication network, the computer-implemented method further comprising:

apportioning the wireless bandwidth available via the wireless communication network amongst one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices and the media interface device.

28. The computing system of claim **17** wherein one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices are coupled via a wireless communication network, the computer-implemented method further comprising:

identifying a specific client electronic device, from the plurality of client electronic devices, which has moved outside of a viewing area of a monitor device coupled to the media interface device and/or a wireless range of the wireless communication network.

29. The computing system of claim **28** further configured to perform operations comprising:

providing the specific client electronic device with an option to continue participating in the synchronous communication session via cellular connectivity.

30. The computing system of claim **28** further configured to perform operations comprising:

providing the synchronous communication session to the specific client electronic device.

31. The computing system of claim **17** further configured to perform operations comprising:

providing the synchronous communication session to one or more of the plurality of client electronic devices used by one or more of the plurality of users during the processing of the broadcast request.

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